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Japan

Agricultural Situation

This Week in Japan

2001

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Report Highlights:

CODEX Biotechnology Task Force Makes Significant Progress; Japan Moves Closer to Safeguards; U.S. Grains Council and North American Export Grain Association Visit on StarLink; In Tokyo, Home Ownership Among Single Women Up.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1], JA



This Week in Japan

An Update of Major News and Events from the Largest U.S. Agricultural Export Market

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- i CODEX Biotechnology Task Force Makes Significant Progress:** U.S. negotiators and AgAffairs staff, participating the Codex Alimentarius Commission's Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology, made significant progress in setting standards for foods derived from biotechnology. In meetings held in Chiba, just outside Tokyo, the Task Force reached near consensus on a draft text of "general principles for risk analysis of foods derived from biotechnology and also announced agreement on a Draft Guideline for the Conduct of Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Recombinant-DNA Plants. However, consensus was not reached on traceability, an EU backed proposal, to trace all foods and food components from their origin to the point of final consumption because the proposal did not relate exclusively to foods derived from biotechnology and could become too complex and costly to operate. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i Japan Moves Closer to Safeguards:** Major Japanese media reported on March 30 that the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Ministry of Finance (MOF) and the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) are moving towards implementing Provisional Safeguard Measures on fresh shiitake mushrooms, welsh onions and tatami mats. Mid-April 2001 is the targeted date for Japan's provisional safeguard measures which would take the form of increased tariffs. For details see FAS/Japan's report (JA1030) dated March 30. (AgAffairs Tokyo)
- i U.S. Grains Council and North American Export Grain Association Visit on StarLink:** The U.S. Grains Council (USGC) and the North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA), separately visiting Japan, held discussions with Japanese health officials regarding testing of unapproved varieties of food products derived from biotechnology. On April 1, 2001, the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare implemented a law prohibiting the import of unapproved varieties. To discuss how to minimize trade impacts of the law on U.S. corn exports to Japan, USGC and NAEGA also met with their Japanese private sector counterparts and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry officials. The discussions were candid and beneficial, resulting in Government of Japan assurances they would make efforts to not disrupt trade through the monitoring requirements. (AgAffairs)
- i In Tokyo, Home Ownership Among Single Women Up:** Home ownership among single women is up significantly, according to a white paper by the Tokyo metropolitan government. The white paper reported that 1.56 million homes in Tokyo are owned by singles with 60 percent owned by single women. Under 34, the distribution is about equal, but over age 34, a larger percentage of single women than their male counter parts own their own home. For example, for women in their late fifties, the figure is double that for men. (AgAffairs Tokyo)

Upcoming events: Apr 4-11 Jonathan Gressel, AIT Taipei; Apr 8-13 Yoonhee Macke, FAS/USDA; May 7 Hop Growers of America; May 14-18 Compliance Review Staff of USMEF/Tokyo